A String of Pearls.

BY ELIZA F. POLLARD, AUTHOR OF "ROGER THE RANGER," ETC.

CHAPTER I.

ORPHANED.

THE northern express sped onwards through the darkness of an October night. In one of the third-class carriages a young couple were gathering together their rugs and wraps, preparatory to their journey's end.

In a corner of the carriage sat a pleasant-faced woman of about thirty, with a girl of eight nestling in her arms.

"Miss Queenie's asleep, ma'am, and I fear to wake her, or she'll cry again—she's that tired."

"Poor little Queenie," said her father, bending for a moment over the sleeping child, "and she's not given to crying. Never mind, Sarah, I can do up these things; it's been a long journey. Keep quiet, Grace," he added, turning to his wife, "you are looking worn out too; you may go to bed as soon as we get home, and leave the unpacking to Sarah and me."

"I am afraid I shall be obliged to," answered Mrs. Cheniston, smiling in her husband's face as with loving care he bent over her, helping to remove the railway rug from her.

"Thank you, dear," she said, with the happy consciousness of loving and being loved.

A sudden fearful shock to the carriage sent Noel Cheniston reeling against the side, the gas in the lamp was extinguished, the train oscillated; then came a tremendous crash, and, in the second which followed, the silence of night was broken by shouts and cries, mingling with the moans of the dead and dying, and then ensued that confusion and horror which make a railway accident one of the most appalling of disasters. The express had been just running into the junction, when, too late, the signalman discovered a goods train had not been shunted into its siding. In spite of slackened speed, the impetus was so frightful that the engine of the express reared up and fell over sideways, while the foremost carriages were smashed like match-wood.

Only three lives were lost, but amongst the dead lay Noel Cheniston.

His poor young wife was carried unconscious to the station-master's house, where, in the early morning, she

"Gathering their rugs and wraps, preparatory to their journey's end."

gave birth to a son. When first she came to herself, all recollection of the accident appeared to have passed from her mind.

They brought her the babe, and in her weakness and the confusion of her senses she just smiled when told it was a boy, saying softly—

"Is my husband glad? Has he seen him?"

Gravely Sarah Colley answered, "I should think so, ma'am, and Miss Queenie is just delighted with her little brother. Now close your eyes and sleep," she continued, fearful lest her mistress should notice the strange surroundings; but Grace Cheniston's exhaustion was such that the brain could make no effort, and she dropped off again.

Towards evening she revived, and while Sarah was feeding her she stopped short, and asked, "Where is my husband? Why does he not come to me?"

Without hesitation Sarah answered, "You were taken ill so sudden like on the journey, ma'am, that the doctor says you must be kept uncommon quiet."

"But my husband!" pleaded the young wife, and then a look as if light were dawning crept into her eyes. Sarah saw it, and said quickly—

"When the doctor comes in the morning, if you've had a good night he'll let you have your way, but we must run no risks if we want to get you home quickly;" and, to prevent her thinking, she gave her a sleeping draught, arranged her pillows, drew the curtains, and with, "Now, ma'am, you'll wake up all right to-morrow," moved to the other side of the room.

With a sigh, Grace Cheniston closed her eyes. "To-morrow," she repeated hopefully, and dropped asleep.

"My husband—what has happened to my husband?"

It was the following day. The doctor was standing beside Mrs. Cheniston's bed, trying to soothe her, trying to ward off a direct answer to her question, and yet feeling it had to be, for memory to a certain extent had returned, and she had greeted him with the words—

"Where am I? Where is my husband, doctor? I remember a crash; then all was dark. We were in the train. Something has happened—something dreadful, I feel sure. Let Noel come to me, or, if he is hurt, take me to him. I must see him."

That he could be dead, never crossed her mind; it was such an inconceivable thing! But when, little by little, the truth dawned upon her, she lay quite still, as one stunned. She neither wept nor moaned, and the doctor, looking at her, knew that she had received her death-blow.

"Send for her people," he said to Sarah.

"I never heard tell that she had any," answered the nurse, as the tears rolled down her kindly face. "Indeed, she has often told me that but for the master she was alone in the world."

And such proved to be the case. When the doctor hinted to Grace Cheniston that she should send for some relative or friend, she answered quite quietly—

"There is only the lawyer, Mr. Dobson. He will settle everything. We were both orphans, Noel and I," and, with a dreamy look, she turned her eyes towards the door, as if she expected him she so loved to come to her.

"All the more reason for you to rouse yourself, my dear lady, for the sake of your children," said the doctor.

She smiled faintly. "Oh, I cannot," she said. "I must go to him; Sarah will look after them. My Noel!" she added softly.

"You dursn't die and leave the poor lambs alone in the world, ma'am," said Sarah.

But the words seemed hardly to reach the dulled senses, alive only to the great love without which she could not comprehend life.

Nothing roused her. They brought her the children, but she turned away. Sarah alternately scolded and coaxed her. All in vain; the doctor felt that she was just slipping through his fingers. They sent for Mr. Dobson, and he made her will, in which she stipulated that Sarah should have charge of the children.

"You will do it because you are a good woman, and they have no one else. They will have my £60 a year, and their father's insurance money," she said to Sarah. "Queenie," for a moment her voice trembled—"tell her to take care of her brother—if he lives!" she added, and closing her eyes Sarah saw two tears roll slowly down the pale face.

"Ah, mistress, you might live and care for them yourself if you would," said Sarah, with a great sob.

But Grace Cheniston shook her head.

"I cannot!" she answered, and not all the doctor's efforts availed to bring her back to life. Love had been the motive power of Grace Cheniston's life; both died with Noel.

Sarah, stooping over her just three days later, heard her murmur—

"It's all right, I'm coming, Noel dear," and she ceased to breathe.

"It is to be devoutly hoped the Lord will take him, poor mite," said Sarah, wiping her eyes and rocking herself backwards and forwards before the kitchen fire.

It was the day of the double funeral. Husband and wife had been laid side by side in the parish churchyard of the town where the accident had happened. The lawyer had decided that it would save expense, and the following day Sarah was to go back with the two children to the desolate home until business matters were settled. The station-master's wife had been very sympathetic, and it was to her Sarah had addressed the above remark.

"One can scarcely wish it should live," she answered slowly, looking towards a clothes-basket which had been transformed into an impromptu cradle, and beside which Marjory Cheniston—Queenie, as her dead parents had loved to call her—stood on guard. "You'll never rear him; he'll be a terrible affliction," continued the station-master's wife.

"An affliction! The Lord take him! Are you speaking of my brother?" said the girl, stepping forward with a certain stateliness, which had perhaps won for her the pet name of Queenie. She was tall for her years, the little face was very pale, and the eyes red with weeping.

"Bless the child!" whispered Mrs. Nutts, "how she does say 'my brother' as if it were the finest baby in the world, instead of a poor little mite with scarcely a breath in its body, and no mother!"

"No mother," repeated Queenie. "You said, Sarah, my mother could have lived if she had liked—I heard

you tell Mr. Dobson she wanted to go; but I am sure mother would not have left us alone if she could have helped it, you must have made a mistake. And now you want my brother to go! It is very cruel; it is very hard of God to take them all, and forget me. Oh, what shall I do? what shall I do?" and, in a passion of grief, she threw herself into Sarah's arms.

"Come, come, don't take on so, Miss Queenie, if it's the Lord's will he should go!"

"'The Lord's will,'" repeated the child. "Why does He want my brother? He shan't have him—no, He shan't!" She had lifted her head from Sarah's shoulder, her face was deadly white, her large brown eyes had an agonised expression in them. Suddenly she grew calm, and kneeling down at Sarah's knee she said,

"Make me say my prayers, Sarah, and you and Mrs. Nutts say your prayers too. Mother said I must always ask God for what I want," and clasping her little hands, she prayed aloud. "Please God, do not take my little brother." She paused. "Noel—we will call him Noel, Sarah, like daddy—because," she continued, "I am all alone and I want him to love me. You mustn't take him or you will be a cruel God. You have daddy, you have mother, you can't want Noel. Please leave him with me, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen."

The two women were weeping.

"Bless the child," said Sarah, folding her in her arms, "I'm minded the Lord will hear you!"

"Of course He will!" answered Queenie, cheerfully; "and you'll take good care of him, you'll help to make him live, won't you, Sarah? See how pretty he is!" and she drew her nurse to the basket and gazed admiringly at the little wizened face.

"Aye, we'll take care of him," said Sarah; "don't fret no more, my little Queenie, all's for the best."

"Even my father and mother going away?" said Queenie doubtfully, with trembling lips.

"I suppose so," said Sarah.

The child sighed impatiently.

"Put me to bed, Sarah, I am so tired. Good night, little Noel." As she spoke she threw her arms round her nurse's neck, and in a few seconds was fast asleep; and so Sarah carried her to bed. Poor Queenie!

CHAPTER II.

THE TOLL-COTTAGE.

"WELL, have you made up your mind—will you take charge of them or won't you?" asked Mr. Dobson, when, having wound up the Cheniston estate, he summoned Sarah before him.

"I've thought the matter over, sir," answered Sarah, "and if you are of opinion that mother's place down in Hampshire be good enough, I'd be glad to take them there, and do for them. I'm that fond of Miss Queenie, and as for the baby, mother 'd take to him, and it's fine air he'll have, so if he's minded to live, it will give him a chance."

"What sort of place have you to take them to?" asked Mr. Dobson.

"My father was toll-man between Barston and Cranbourne, and when the toll was done away with, he bought the cottage and orchard. It's a small place, but it's comfortable. Since father died mother finds it lonely, and has been wishing for me to go home to her, but I could not leave the mistress; now it is different. I'll keep and do for the children if you be willing, sir, to trust them to mother and me."

Mr. Dobson was silent for a moment, considering; then he asked, "What's the name of the vicar of your parish?"

"Mr. Bradley, sir," answered Sarah.

"Very well," said Mr. Dobson, "I'll write to him to-day. It is not that I have any doubts as to your respectability, Sarah, but for form's sake it is as well to lay the case before the vicar; then, if you are in any trouble, you can apply to him."

"Certainly, sir, I have no objection," answered Sarah.

"Very good," said Mr. Dobson. "I will write to you as soon as I hear from the vicar, and as I have no doubt everything will prove satisfactory, hold yourself in readiness to start home at once with the children. It is, of course, a very responsible position."

"I have had Miss Queenie ever since she was born," said Sarah, tears filling her eyes. "I could not abide giving her up to strangers, she's not just like other children."

"It would be hard upon her too," said Mr. Dobson, taking up his hat, "and I do not anticipate the necessity. Good day; you shall hear from me," and nodding not unkindly to Sarah, he went out.

A week later Sarah arrived with her two charges at the toll-cottage. It was one of those lovely nooks which are scattered far and wide throughout old England. Wild and picturesque, almost desolate in its loneliness, the old-fashioned thatched building stood at the fork of two roads, one leading across heath and down, the other branching into cool, dense, far-stretching woods, whilst a third road, facing the cottage, led to the village of Barston, and eventually to the sea coast.

It was, as Sarah had said, a peaceful, healthy spot—a fit nursery for two children, fatherless and motherless, whose only stay was the "All-father," and nature their nursing mother. Their coming created a considerable excitement in the village, and everyone dropped in to see Sarah Colley's nurslings; the tragic death of their young parents filled all hearts with pity.

On the first Sunday, the baby was baptised in the parish church, "Noel Benjamin." Sarah added the second name as being eminently suitable.

Having accomplished this first act of his little life, Sarah carried her boy home, Marjory walking beside her, silent, and almost sullen, notwithstanding the attention she had received.

Indeed, she rather resented the tones and looks of pity which were generally bestowed upon her and her brother. When they reached the cottage she pushed the door open, stood back for Sarah with the baby to enter, and then closing it with a bang, said with a sigh of relief, "They won't come in here now; if they do, I'll keep them out," and she drew herself up proudly.

"Ah, Miss Queenie, you mustn't be so proud; they meant it kindly," said Sarah.

"I don't care; I don't want to be pitied or to hear Noel called 'a poor mite.' He'll grow up to be a big, fine man one day, like father, if they will only wait!" and passionate tears filled her beautiful dark eyes. She was at bay, this child of eight years old, who had been the

darling and companion of both father and mother, and now was suddenly left alone, face to face with the world, conscious of possessing but one thing really her own—the baby boy to whom she clung so desperately, for whose rights she was ready to do battle with all her little might.

The vicar and his wife called upon Sarah a few days later, to propose taking Marjory into their schoolroom; they had two girls of their own and a governess. She could share their studies; it would be better for her in every way than the village school, the only other resource the neighbourhood offered, except the High School at Cranbourne, three miles distant.

"I would rather go to the High School," said Marjory, eagerly. "Mother always said I should when I was old enough."

"But you are not old enough," answered Mrs. Bradley, "and little girls must do as they are told. I will write to Mr. Dobson, and tell him the offer I have made you. I think he will see the advantages of it."

"Thank you kindly, ma'am," answered Sarah, firmly, "but Mr. Dobson does not wish to be troubled. He said distinctly, 'You'll do what you think best for both the children, Sarah. Your late mistress trusted you, and so do I.' Miss Queenie wishes to go to the High School, and so she shall. I'll manage."

"But you'll ruin the child, giving in to her like that," said Mrs. Bradley.

"I hope not," said Sarah. "She's a good child, and knows what is right. She'll not go far wrong."

Annoyed at the repulse she had received, Mrs. Bradley left the cottage, remarking to her husband, "It is a great mistake to have placed the girl with the Colleys; she is too old, and evidently rules the roast. It's 'Miss Queenie this' and 'Miss Queenie that.' I believe her name is 'Marjory.' Why not call her so? Of course, you will write to Mr. Dobson and tell him the advantages we offered the child, and which her nurse refused for her. It is the height of folly to send a girl of that age three miles to the High School."

Nevertheless, Queenie had her own way. Sarah managed that she should get a lift into Cranbourne in the morning, dine at the school, and come back at the close of the day; and when once this life had begun it went on without break or hindrance until Queenie was fifteen and Noel six, a bright, healthy child full of life and spirits. Once the novelty of their arrival was over, no one paid any further attention to them. The vicar called from time to time, and always spoke kindly when he happened to meet the children. Queenie was regular in her attendance at church and Sunday-school, and so he was satisfied.

The "toll-cottage," as we have said, was some distance from the village, and for weeks together in the winter no one came out to trouble them. Widow Colley and Sarah made it a bright and happy home by the love and care they bestowed on the orphans. Queenie worked hard, made rapid progress, and gave promise of being one of the best pupils at the High School. She had already passed her junior examination, and was studying for higher honours.

"I must work hard, you know, Sarah," she would say; "Noel must be educated. I mean him to go to college, or take up any profession he wishes just as if father had lived, and unless I work you know quite well that will be impossible. Miss Anderson says if I can get a scholarship I may go to college, and by the time I am one-and-twenty I may be earning a good salary; Noel will then be fourteen. You'll see I shall manage it." And her eyes shone with energy and ambition, the outcomings of her great love.

She was a tall, handsome girl, with dark, hazel eyes and waving masses of rich, sunny-brown hair—Sarah's pride. Indeed, no children could have been better cared for than these two.

"They be gentlefolks, and people may as well know it," Sarah was wont to say; and though they were "Queenie" and "Noel" at home, she never spoke of them to strangers save as "Miss Queenie," and of late, as she grew older, "Miss Cheniston" and "Master Noel." She often sat up far into the night, making and mending for them, for the allowance was not large, and it was hard to make two ends meet. Queenie saw and understood the self-sacrifice, and would throw her arms round Sarah's neck, exclaiming—

"How good you are, Sarah! But you shan't always work so hard. Wait till I'm older!"

(To be continued.)

"WILL YOU LAUGH TO ME AGAIN, MOTHER?"

IT was little three-year-old Mabel who asked this question one morning in the early spring. She had been bringing me the first spring flowers, and oh! how "buful" she thought those bright yellow dandelions were. I had enjoyed them too, and had responded to her enthusiasm with words of appreciation and thanks; but it was the smile which seemed to delight the little darling most, and, as she started out to hunt for more flowers, she came back to ask in her own earnest, winsome way, "Will you laugh to me again, mother?"

It was a simple question, or rather request, but it almost startled me, and started a new train of thought. Was that dear little heart hungry for more brightness, and thus seeking for it as the vine sends forth its tiny branches in search of the sunshine?

While careful, and perhaps too often troubled about household duties, striving to have everything as comfortable as possible for the dear husband and little ones, had I been failing to give them the smiles and sunshine which their hearts craved, and which I could so gladly and easily give them?

When I was quite young, I remember being touched by hearing a little child say, "Mamma, they are the *laughingest* folks at Uncle P——'s I ever saw. I wish we had more laughin' at *our* house."

Ah! perhaps our little ones often wish for "more laughin' at our house," though they do not say so. Surely we should strive in every way to gladden their young lives, and be careful that by our careworn, or perhaps frowning, faces and unsympathetic words we do not repel their natural light-heartedness.

LIFE'S SUMMER-TIME.

IN the summer of life and the summer of love,
Pretty maid Margaret sits in the sun,
Flowers around her and blue skies above—
Hey for a maiden that's wooed and that's won!
Hey for the blossoms, the fragrance, the light!
Hey for the swift-coming future and bright!

When flowers shall perish and blossoms shall die,
When clouds overshadow the radiant blue,
When summer is passing and winter is nigh,
Hey for a lover that's staunch and that's true!
Hey for a shelter from tempests secure!
Hey for a love that shall always endure!

SHIRLEY WYNNE.

HOW GIRLS CAN EARN THEIR LIVING.

BY CLEMENTINA BLACK, AUTHOR OF "MATCH-BOX MAKING AT HOME," ETC.

III.—AS CLERKS AND TYPISTS.

WITHIN the last few years there has been an ever-growing tendency to employ women as clerks, and the universal testimony of employers is that the woman clerk is more satisfactory than the man clerk. She is more industrious, more "biddable," as Mrs. Nickleby said of Smike; she doesn't smoke, drink or gamble, and hitherto she appears to have refrained entirely from embezzling her employer's money. Yet the employer, who frankly admits all these virtues, does not pay her as much as he pays to the admittedly less satisfactory man. A girl filling the place of an ordinary clerk in a private office will probably receive about ten shillings a week, with no prospect of ever rising to an income of above £80 a year at the outside. There are many offices where she will be paid less than ten shillings a week—I know of one instance, at least, in which young women who act as clerks are paid the handsome salary of five shillings a week—and few in which she will be paid more than fourteen shillings.

Now, on less than ten shillings a week a girl cannot keep herself according to the social requirements of the class from which clerks come. Girls who take less are girls whose support is provided for them from some other source, generally by the parents in whose home they live. I should therefore like to say once more, what I have said over and over again, in print, in private speech, and in public speech, that the supported woman does a cruel and wicked thing when she accepts for her work payment on which she could not live. To do so is wicked, because it helps to make impossible the earning of a livelihood by the woman who is not supported.

If your daughter, with a good home, who pays no rent and no board, works for five shillings a week and so supplies herself with clothes and amusements, her employer and her employer's competitors will certainly not pay ten shillings for similar work to the girl without father or mother, for whom neither shelter nor food are provided. In plain words, your girl is making honest life as a clerk impossible for the other girl—not because she does the work, but because she does it for less than a living wage. One of these days it may be your daughter who will be left to supply her own needs, and will find five shillings a week facing her as the market price of a woman clerk's working hours.

If every girl living at home and applying for a clerkship would say boldly to the employer who offers too low a wage: "Sir, I can't take it because I can't live on it," there would be some hope of diminishing the awful miseries and temptations which beset the girl who has to live by her work—or by something else—or die.

At the best, the ordinary clerkship is a calling offering very poor prospects. Writing is being superseded, for purposes of office correspondence, by typewriting; and even typewriting is becoming an accomplishment so common that the typewriting market is overstocked, work is hard to get, and rates are diminishing. The girl who means to do well as a typist (remember, the girl is not a type *writer*—that is the name of the machine) will be wise to add to her proficiency in machine work some special knowledge or accomplishment not belonging to all typists.

The most usual additional accomplishment is shorthand, and for the very reason that it is so usual it is ceasing by itself to command a good salary. A girl who possesses a wide general education and a knowledge of foreign languages may, if she is also a shorthand writer and a typist, obtain a post as private secretary, which will probably be better paid than any clerkship, and the work of which will be far more interesting, but, at the same time, of course, far more responsible. Private secretaryships are not numerous, but their number is likely to increase as more and more ladies of wealth and position take part in public affairs. They will never, however, be likely to furnish occupation for any but the highly educated who have been accustomed to mix in society and to have business dealings with many people.

To the girl of merely average education and of small experience there are but two ways of securing special terms. One is to acquire the highest possible skill and precision in the ordinary branches, which obviously can be acquired only by a person of rather unusual power and perseverance; the other is to make herself mistress of some special branch, so as to supply some special need.

For instance, solicitors are beginning largely to have various deeds and documents typewritten instead of copied by hand, and I am assured by a solicitor that the typewritten copies are often full of errors, the result of the typist's total ignorance of the meaning of the legal terms employed. The knowledge required is not very vast or difficult to acquire, and some two or three young women who would really study so much law as would make them able to undertake absolute accuracy in typing legal work, take an office in the regions near Gray's Inn, and issue a short and sensible circular, setting forth their special qualifications would, to say the least, have a better chance of making an income than if they started business for the great general public. And what is true of solicitors is true of some other callings—architects and surveyors, for instance. The intelligent may inquire and find congenial openings and special customers, or even towns at present unsupplied with typewriting offices.

Typewriting in general has a certain danger—the danger of being made not a skilled, real industry, a "good trade," but a makeshift—one of the endless methods by which a girl "helps out" and encourages herself to believe that she can "earn a little" without proper training, regular hours, or real industry. It would be a sad thing if the typewriter should become to the girl of the middle class what the sewing machine too often is to the woman of the poorer class—for the first users, a more or less slovenly means of

earning an addition to a supplied support; for the later comers, the instrument of an extremely ill-paid drudgery. Work done at home is always apt to degenerate into work ill done. The parents who respect their daughters' work as they would respect their sons' are still very rare; and the girl who means really to know a trade, whether it be teaching, dressmaking, or typewriting, had better both learn and practise her calling away from her home. Her standard of achievement will then be that of the market, not that founded tacitly on the assumption that a girl's work is not and need not be serious. That assumption, confirmed too often by the incompetence of women who find themselves suddenly expected to earn a living which they have never been taught to earn, is one great cause of the double evil of bad work and bad pay. It is the duty of every mother to assume that her daughter ought to be well trained, competent, and business-like, and also to see that she becomes so.

HOW FAR A CHILD TRAVELS.

THE limit of man's capacity for speed and endurance in travel, under given conditions, is a matter of record, but who has not witnessed the almost ceaseless activity of a child, and been led to exclaim, "I wonder how far that child has travelled to-day?"

A gentleman recently attempted to answer this query in an ingenious way. He had the floor of his nursery covered with white muslin. He then strapped to the ankle of an eighteen-months-old child a "marker," consisting of an inked pad, that made a plain mark on the cloth for every step taken.

The child was allowed to roam about and to amuse itself as usual, and at night the marks were counted. There were the almost incredible number of 6,483 marks, which, allowing six inches to each step, made the sum of the day's journeyings 3,242 feet, or almost three-fourths of a mile.

The child was probably not above the average in point of activity and endurance, and its feat was only that of many another little one whose mother finds it dropping asleep in her arms at night before the night-gown can be coaxed over its head, while the older members of the family wonder "what makes baby so cross and tired to-night."

The gentleman next experimented with his boy of nine years, who was out of school and in a district affording space and attractions for rambling. He purchased a pedometer, an instrument for measuring distances walked—on the principle of the cyclometer used for measuring the distance travelled in a carriage or on a bicycle. This he managed to get into the bottom of the boy's pocket, among the marbles, nails, twine, knives, and other bric-a-brac there collected. Its additional weight was not noticed for a few days, and in that time it did its work of recording the little lad's activity.

The first day the instrument registered nine and an eighth miles, and the boy was at the table for every meal. The second day's record was ten and three-sevenths miles; the third a rainy day, seven and a half; the fourth, nine and eight-seventeenths.

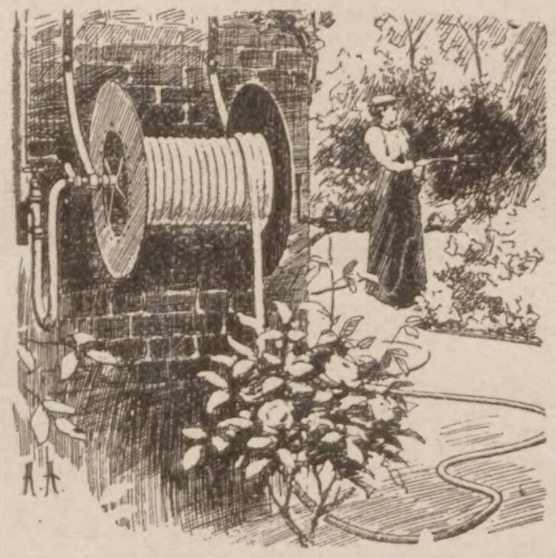
The family were astonished at the result, and thereafter, when any one complained of a walk of a mile or so, nobody pooh-poohed louder than Bob, the boy upon whom the interesting pedal experiment was made. One other noticeable result was that Bob got his monthly pair of shoes without the usual lecture on the sin of wearing them out so fast.

S. T.

NOVEL NOTIONS.

A GARDEN HOSE-REEL.

GARDENING is certainly one of the most delightful of outdoor pastimes for women. The beauty of the flowers, the interest in their growth, the bracing air and sun, and the gentle exercise are a combination of enticements not to be found in any other hobby. One drawback, however, is often urged—the drudgery of watering plants pail by pail, especially in very hot, dry weather. Even this difficulty is now met effectively. In our illustration we show a capital hose-reel for gardens. The article is fixed against the wall, and the hose gives a supply of water all the time it is being run off the reel. It will be noticed that the hose is joined to the water-pipe by a valve within reach. Another splendid use for this apparatus must also be mentioned: in case of fire it might render very needful service as a handy extinguisher.



DRIED FLOWERS.

ONE often sees very pretty arrangements of dried flowers under glass in the form of screens, "transparencies," and even as "pictures." Unfortunately, the colours of the blooms get faded in the process of drying by reason of ammonia in the air. But chemists tell us that this need not be so, as even the delicate tint of the poppy has been retained after drying. One expert presses his specimens between sheets of paper which have been previously saturated with a solution of one per cent. of oxalic acid in water, and declares this method to be quite successful.

*** Readers wishing for further information about the Garden Hose Reel illustrated above are invited to write to the Editor at 9, Paternoster Row, London, E.C., enclosing a stamped envelope for reply.

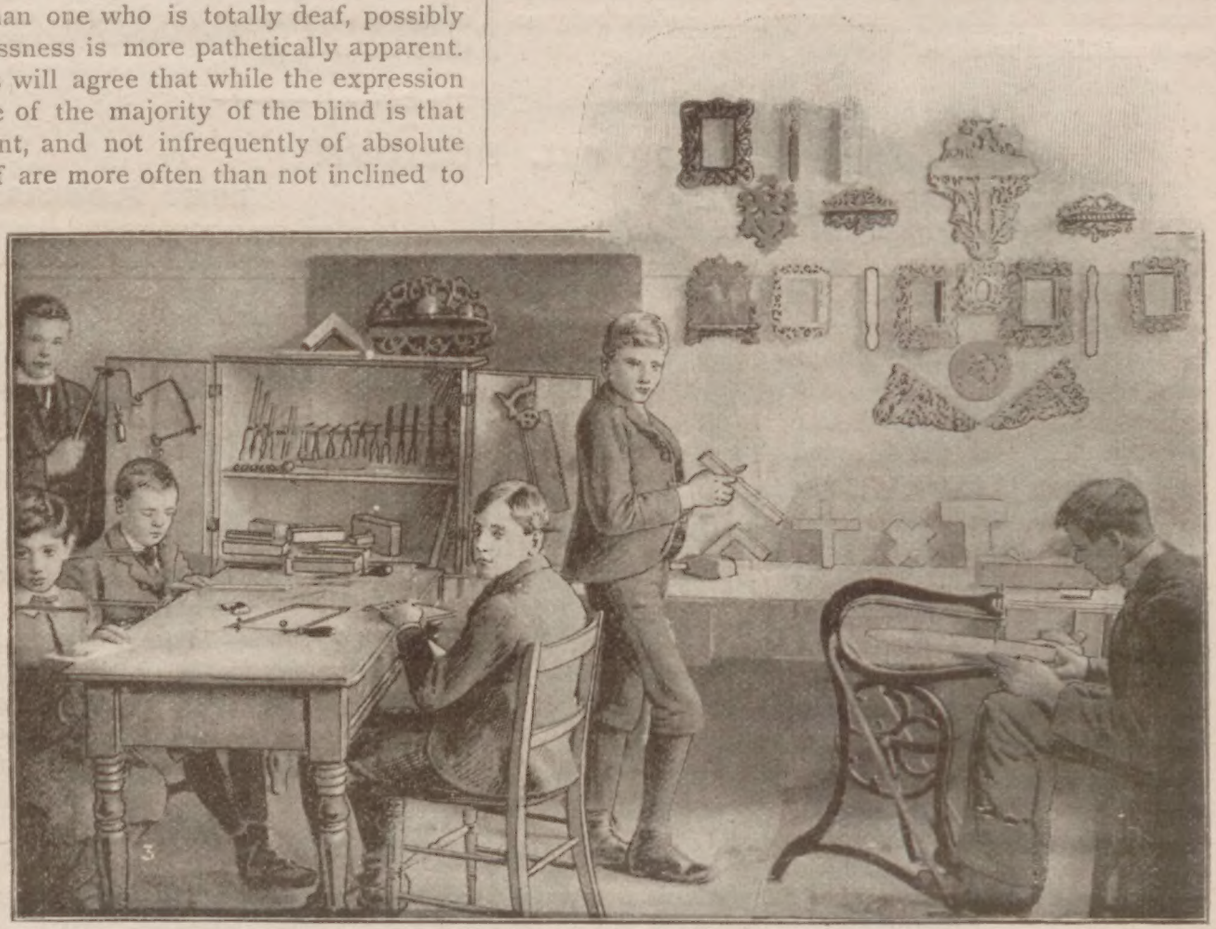
Taking a Lesson in Pure Oral Teaching.

A WORK OF GENIUS.

BY JENNIE CHAPPELL, AUTHOR OF "SOME HOME-MADE TOYS," ETC.

IF the question were asked of the first twenty persons one might meet in the street, "Which do you consider the greater affliction, to be blind, or deaf?" it is probable that at least two-thirds would answer that if forced to make the choice, they would rather forfeit their hearing, precious as the faculty is, than their sight; and a blind person usually excites more pity from his fellow-creatures than one who is totally deaf, possibly because his helplessness is more pathetically apparent. Yet most observers will agree that while the expression on the countenance of the majority of the blind is that of calm contentment, and not infrequently of absolute happiness, the deaf are more often than not inclined to gloom, depression, and a habit of suspiciousness very detrimental to their own peace of mind.

We think that a little reflection may lead us to one, at least, of the causes of this difference. It is well known that when sight is lost, the sense of hearing, if only by the consequent habit of close attention, is rendered more acute. The blind man hears much that amuses and interests him, suggesting mental pictures in his own imagination that, in ordinary cases, are more likely than not to be pleasing; he is certainly far less shut out than the deaf from intercourse with his friends. The deaf man, on the other hand, is constantly tormented by the spectacle of people talking around him, laughing at jokes into which he cannot enter, receiving with gestures of delight or surprise news at the purport of which he can but



Fret-cutters at Work.

In the Schoolroom.

vainly guess, showing signs of sympathy or sadness for which he cannot divine the cause. When, as frequently happens, loss or disuse of speech is a consequence of the absence of hearing, the deaf-mute's lot is sad indeed. No wonder he grows dull, apathetic, or even morose!

Until little more than a quarter of a century ago the only method by which it was believed possible in our country to communicate with such afflicted ones was by an elaborate code of signs, assisted by what we used to call the Deaf and Dumb Alphabet, with which not one in a hundred of ordinary folk were acquainted. The idea of enabling a deaf-mute to enter into ordinary vocal intercourse with his fellow-creatures would once have been deemed as preposterous as expecting a blind man to paint a picture.

But the wonderful thing has been done. And any reader who may choose to visit No. 11, Fitzroy Square, London, W., at three o'clock on any Wednesday afternoon, except during the usual school vacations, can realise the, to most of us, extraordinary experience of holding a spoken conversation without difficulty with a number of bright and intelligent young people who have never heard the sound of even their own voices.

We have several times visited the interesting institution at the above address, which, as a Training College for Teachers and a School for deaf-mute children, is, under the able directorship of Mr. William Van Praagh—the first, we believe, to publicly introduce the Pure Oral System into this country—doing a doubly good work. Students of both sexes, among whom is at the present time a Hindoo gentleman who wishes to qualify himself for the instruction of deaf-mutes in Calcutta, are prepared to fill useful and lucrative appointments in both public and private spheres; while about fifty children, otherwise heavily handicapped in the race for knowledge by varying degrees of deafness, are being brought as near as possible to the educational level of their hearing comrades, and fitted to enjoy the ordinary duties and pleasures of life equally with others.

Seven years is the age at which the education of a deaf-mute should begin, and it ought to continue at the very least until the age of fifteen, if really successful results are looked for.

The first thing which the child is taught is the inspiration and expiration of the breath, which is illustrated by blowing

The Sewing Class.

on the back of the hand. Then with one of the pupil's hands against the teacher's throat and the other upon his own, he learns the vowel sounds; and, the consonants following in carefully chosen order, the little fellow by closely watching his teacher's lips, is soon able to delight his anxious friends by saying distinctly "Papa," "Mamma," "Baby," and so forth.

In the next stage of education we find children who easily lip read and fluently utter such phrases as "How do you do?" "Go to the window," "Shut the door," etc. They will readily name any article in common use, and write the word correctly on the blackboard, writing and spelling being taught at the same time. And the orthography as well as the caligraphy in all the classes being excellent, Mr. Van Praagh is amply justified in his recommendation that this method be applied in the instruction of hearing children as well as the deaf. These latter learn to speak, to lip-read, to read and to write simultaneously. Or, to quote from Mr. Van Praagh's admirable article on the subject in "Cassell's Storehouse of General Information," "When the teacher pronounces a sound the child imitates it—that is, he *speaks;* he is taught to recognise it when spoken—he *lip-reads;* he is taught the sound in letters he *reads*, and imitates them on the blackboard, the slate, or paper—he *writes*."

"Is this a coat?" asks Mr. Van Praagh of a bright little girl, as he points to her outer garment. "No," is the unhesitating reply, "it is a jacket."

The request, "Show me your pinafore," is promptly responded to by a child who is wearing one; but on a boy being asked, "Do you wear a pinafore?" he laughingly replied "No!" "Why not?" "Because I am a boy."

In a higher class we hear children reply instantly and correctly to all sorts of questions on history, geography, and mental arithmetic. We put a few ourselves, which, notwithstanding the natural shyness of the young people with a stranger, are easily understood and intelligently answered. One boy takes great pains to perfectly pronounce the certainly not easy word *Constantinople*, repeating his efforts, with gaze fixed upon the teacher's lips, until the difficulty has been surmounted. It is almost impossible to realise that he is only hearing with his eyes!

With the more advanced pupils, as we said before, it is quite possible to carry on a pleasant conversation on any ordinary topic. It is striking to observe that they understand as readily if the words are formed soundlessly with the lips only, as when in audible speech; also, that they will catch one's remarks when only the profile is presented to them as well as when they have a view of the speaker's full face. Those who have a slight sense of hearing, as well as those who have spoken themselves in the remote past, have an advantage over the others whom we call "stone-deaf," in the softer and more natural modulations of their voices; but it is highly necessary that children becoming deaf should at once be taught to lip-read, and also to keep up their vocal speech, as if this is neglected they will gradually lose both the power and the desire to talk.

All ordinary branches of education are included in the curriculum of these deaf-mutes, who appear, if one may judge from an examination of their home-lesson books, and from the answers orally given to their teacher's spoken questions, to be about as forward in their attainment of knowledge as average hearing children. Physical development is not overlooked, the pupils being daily exercised at drill, and manual dexterity is acquired by both sexes in the pleasant and useful arts of drawing, painting, fretwork, carpentering, needlework and dress-cutting. There are also museums of interesting objects for the younger children, including toys, models, stuffed animals, and various familiar objects, the names of which the little ones soon learn to speak as well as write. And last, but not least, there is a library for the use of those hearing students whose training as teachers forms so important a feature in the work of the college.

When we see a deaf-mute at the finish of his education—*deaf* still, but no longer *dumb*—cheerful, useful, able to enter into the conversation of those around him, and even possessing an advantage over ordinary hearing folk, in that he can catch, with his eyes, the faintest whisper as easily as the loudest speech, and "hear" with ease every word addressed to him amid the greatest din, and compare him with what he once was, and what he might, without such blessed help, have ever remained, can we not truly say that his happy transformation has been a work of genius indeed?

Helps for Busy Housewives.

GREASE MARKS.—If you are so unfortunate as to spill hot fat on your floor, pour some cold water on it at once. This will cool the grease quickly, and prevent it from soaking into the boards. Then clean the disfiguring marks as soon as possible.

Taking Medicine.—The resort to strong medication in the form of pills, powders, and potions, may mitigate the symptoms of painful maladies, but it should be remembered that this practice often retards natural curative processes, and may weaken even good constitutions. As a rule, medicines should be taken only on experience or trustworthy advice.

Children's Sleep.—A young child should always be put to bed in the morning for a couple of hours before dinner. He will then awake refreshed for the rest of the day. This practice should be continued until he is three years old, or even longer if he can be prevailed upon. Should he not sleep in the middle of the day, he will generally sleep all the afternoon, and will be cross in the evening; and when he goes to bed at night he will probably be too tired to sleep, or will fall into a troubled, broken slumber.

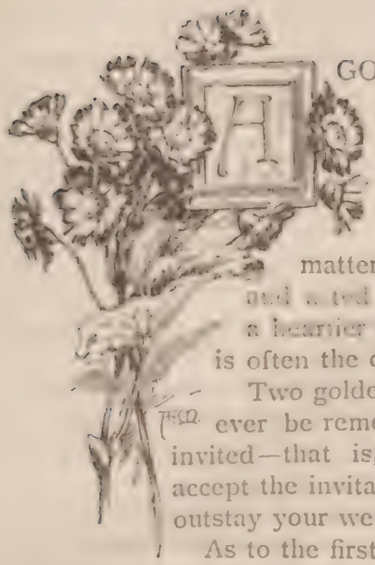
Healthy Plants.—Palms and similar plants should be regularly sponged over to keep them clean and healthy. They may also be taken to the sink or back-yard and syringed. Either method is well repaid, for it cleanses the pores; in fact, allows the plant to breathe. Once a week is usually enough, and the very little trouble occasioned will be compensated over and over again.

Curing Bad Smells.—To overcome a bad smell by means of disinfectants may be desirable, but it must be borne in mind that these do not purify the air. Seek out the cause, and have the defect properly remedied.

Tinted Lace.—Everyone knows that washed lace is improved by being dyed in cold coffee, but perhaps blondes are not aware that if it be dipped in tea it will become a colour more likely to suit them. At any rate, lace dyed in tea is a nice change and keeps fresh longer.

THE HOLIDAY GUEST.

BY JOSEPHA CRANE.



A GOOD deal has been written on the duties of a hostess. We purpose here to pen a few hints anent the duties of a holiday guest, for there are various small matters which, if duly considered and acted out, would probably ensure a heartier welcome to such a one than is often the case.

Two golden rules to start with should ever be remembered. Go when you are invited—that is, if it is your intention to accept the invitation. The second is, do not outstay your welcome.

As to the first point. Unless you are on very intimate terms with your hostess, you should not suggest any alteration in the time she proposes for your visit. Having decided to go, reply to the invitation with a courteous note, which is the least those have a right to expect who honour you by asking you to come and share their home life for a short time. Should unforeseen circumstances delay you at the last moment, send a telegram to acquaint your friends of the misadventure. But be careful to ascertain how near the post office is to the house, as in the country there is often some distance between the two, and the recipient of your message has to pay for the delivery. Prepay the cost, therefore, if you can possibly do so.

Take every precaution against losing your train or steamer; and endeavour to be punctual not only on your arrival, but throughout your visit. Inquire the hour of meals, prayers, etc., and endeavour always to be in time. In the morning do not come down if you happen to have risen early, but wait until the bell rings.

While it is most assuredly true that as a guest you are not expected to acquaint your entertainers with all your movements, still it is very thoughtless and impolite to absent yourself for any length of time, much less from any meal, without previously advising them that you are going to do so. If for any reason you are obliged to have some special kind of food or drink, or are unable to partake of what you expect to find provided, your simplest plan is to tell your hostess of the fact.

A guest to be welcome to servants and masters alike should avoid giving much trouble to the former, as is done by untidy and careless people. Some persons cannot take their bath without slopping the water in all directions, and when they wash their hands, which may be several times during the day, they empty nearly the whole of the water-jug into the basin, when a much less quantity would have served their purpose equally well. With regard to order in their rooms, it is very inconsiderate, particularly if there be only one servant, to leave clothes lying about in all directions, and also to use more boots than are really necessary.

Always do all you can for your hostess. For instance, if she is giving a party, contribute as much as possible to its success. Your own tact will guide you where or where not to offer assistance in any preparations. Some people will be only too glad of your help, and be very pleased if you can aid in decorations, make a pretty dish, give a few flowers procured by yourself, assist in arranging the rooms, and be useful in countless ways, while others would prefer your effacing yourself as much as possible. During a party identify yourself with the family, and help them to see after the guests, rather than expect the former to look after you. If you can sing, recite, play, or are clever at games, then use your talents for the benefit of the rest, and be equally ready, if you are not needed, to do nothing at all.

It sometimes happens that a young girl is staying with friends, but her pocket-money may not be equal to the demands upon it if she is expected to purchase her own ticket for an entertainment, or a journey, should such be proposed, and it may place her in a very difficult position, unless she is franked on all occasions of the kind. A little thought may save her much annoyance, and if this attention is offered on the part of her entertainers, she should accept it quite simply, and not necessarily feel that the obligation is very burdensome. She is one of the family for the time being, and as such is sharing the life of the rest, including what necessitates money being spent on her as on them. On the other hand, you as a guest may have a very much larger account at your banker's than your host, and it may be in your power to return his kindness in inviting you, by franking him to some amusement, or taking him for some excursion. You may not be able to invite your host to your home, but much lies in your power to prove your appreciation of his kindness to you. In any case, a guest can show many a little courtesy which may be welcome and acceptable. Treat the children, or give them presents, or find out some need of the hostess or any member of the family and supply it. All this can be done if a little thought is exercised.

One point should be very carefully borne in mind while partaking of hospitality—"eating the salt," as they say in the East. Avoid provoking your host into saying anything unbecoming to his guests. If you wilfully elect topics of conversation on which he holds opposite views to your own, if you trot out your pet theories when his own are completely opposed to them, you are in great danger of unwisely irritating him. Under other circumstances, to dispute or argue is a matter of choice, but discussions likely to lead to loss of temper or excited speech on either or both sides are best avoided.

Try to adapt yourself generally to the ways of the house, and never criticise them to the family. You do not visit with a view to reforming your entertainers or their ways, so avoid all that can savour of dictation.

In visiting, you should share the general home life as much as you perceive that your hostess desires you to do so. With many people, too, half the pleasure of having a guest is to show him all they can of the place or neighbourhood, and even if you sometimes feel bored, you should try to conceal the fact. Have occupation of your own which you can take up when opportunity offers, so as to free your hostess from the burden of feeling that you need perpetual entertaining.

As a final hint, when the time of a visit expires, the guest should go on the exact day. People who have many visitors, often plan the arrival of one to succeed the immediate departure of another, and to stay beyond the limit of the invitation is likely to cause great inconvenience, if not annoyance, and is in the worst possible taste. If care is taken and minor details of behaviour attended to, the visitor may be asked again, and that in itself will prove that he or she has been a welcome holiday guest.

LOVE'S VICTORY.

BY EDITH C. KENYON, AUTHOR OF "FOR RICHER, FOR POORER," ETC.

OU must expect a few trials, Lottie, dear. It is foolish to think that after marriage everything will be as merry as a wedding-bell."

"Now, mother, don't moralise, pray don't," exclaimed Lottie, looking up at her beautiful step-mother, who had only six months before been widowed by the death of the girl's father. "I don't expect perfect happiness, of course—I am not so foolish as to imagine that, as the old-fashioned story-books used to have it, we shall get married and live happily ever after—still, I do think that we have a fair prospect of happiness. We are both young, healthy, not bad-looking; we shall have a moderately good income, and——"

"And you both love and serve the same Lord and Master," interposed Mrs. Andrews, in her own gentle way.

"Yes, dearest, of course," said Lottie; "that is our great bond of union."

She looked thoughtful as she went on packing in a box some of her own especial treasures. On the morrow she was going to marry a doctor who had a good practice in the thriving little town of Tenborough, in Yorkshire. Leonard Fairfax, the younger son of a manufacturer in Leeds, had fallen in love with sweet Lottie Andrews when she was staying with some friends at Tenborough the summer before, shortly after he had bought his practice and settled down there. It was just before her father died, and she was so gay and bright and lovable that he felt she had a charm for him that no one else had ever possessed. Then she was suddenly recalled home, and in two months' time returned again to her friends the St. Clairs in much trouble because she had lost her father by death. Some slight indisposition made the St. Clairs call in Dr. Fairfax's aid, and perceiving her illness was more of mind than body, and sympathising much with her, he strove to cheer her, lent her books, and, in fact, paid her all sorts of little attentions. The end of it all was that he won her love, made her an offer, and now, after a brief engagement, they were going to be quietly married.

Lottie's only sister, Ethel, would remain with their step-mother, who had no children of her own. She was only a few years older than the two girls, who were much attached to her. Having taken a small house in Tenborough, in order that they might be near Lottie, they were going there immediately after the wedding.

So the young folk were married, and after a short honeymoon in Wales, returned to Tenborough, to live in the pretty house Dr. Fairfax owned in the best part of the town.

"It is all like a beautiful dream. I am *so* happy," said Lottie to her mother and sister, several times during those first weeks. "Leonard is just perfection. He always lets me do as I like, and that you know is charming."

"He is a dear good fellow," said Mrs. Andrews, warmly, for she heartily liked her son-in-law. "You must be careful to respect his wishes, too, Lottie."

"Of course. Do I not *love* him?" was the young wife's ready answer.

It was only the next day that the first tiny "rift within the lute" occurred. Lottie, always careless about money, found she had finished the very liberal supply with which her mother had provided her when leaving home.

"Leonard, just let me have ten pounds, will you?" she asked, as her husband was preparing to leave the house that morning.

"Certainly, my darling," he responded, going back to his room to fetch her the money. As he handed it to her he suggested that she should keep accounts. "Just dot down what you spend, dear, and how you spend it every day," he said; "I always do."

Somehow Lottie did not quite like that. And after he had gone off to see his patients, she pouted a little as she placed the notes in her purse. "Now, I do hope he's not inclined to be mean," she said to herself; "I could not stand that."

By-and-by she went out into the town to do her shopping, and met Ethel engaged on a similar errand.

They were very merry together over what was to them quite pleasant work; and in buying sundry things which she thought would improve her home and add an additional charm to her own dress, Lottie's money rapidly disappeared, and she quite forgot her husband's wish about the accounts.

Leonard Fairfax hated debts; he always paid ready money for what he bought, and on their marriage had requested his young wife to do the same. But Mr. Andrews, her late father, was peculiar in this respect; he would not give his daughters a dress allowance, but encouraged them to run up bills with the tradesmen, which he paid without questioning, once a year. This was a bad plan, tempting shopkeepers to charge almost anything they pleased, and causing the girls to be unused to money and quite unaware of its real value.

In a day or two Lottie had to ask her husband for more money. He gave some to her at once, but looked grave when she admitted she was not keeping any accounts. She did not see the use of it, she said: when the money was spent it was spent, and no amount of

items and figures upon paper would bring it back again.

"My dear Lottie, to please me, even if you do not see the use of it, do as I wish in this matter," pleaded the young husband.

Lottie made some attempts to do as he wished. But the result only made her head ache. She was not clever at arithmetic, she always forgot what the prices of things were, and lost the little notes the shop assistants gave her. Soon, therefore, she said she could not trouble to keep accounts.

Dr. Fairfax looked grave. Again and again he tried to get Lottie to see the matter differently. But in vain.

Lottie pouted and thought her husband disagreeable. He was very patient with her, but when she became cross and sulky, he grew angry.

Six months passed by, and one day in early spring Mrs. Andrews was surprised by her step-daughter coming to her, in a state of much agitation, declaring that she could not live with Leonard any longer — her life had become unbearable.

"My dear child," said the gentle widow, in tones of great concern, "you cannot surely mean what you are saying."

"I do mean it!" Lottie flung herself upon a low chair, and buried her face in her hands, but not to hide her tears, she was too angry to weep.

"Leonard is unjust, unreasonable, miserly, cruel!" she gasped at length.

Mrs. Andrews looked unutterably shocked. All her married life she had carefully concealed whatever faults she perceived in her own dear husband. If a man's wife condemns him—and to other people — where indeed can he look for charity?

"Lottie," she said indignantly.

"Well, he is," cried the young wife; "you don't know how he has treated me lately. Why, he has even suggested that he should ask one of his sisters to come and keep house for us! Well, she may come and keep house for him—I am leaving him—I——"

"Lottie," said her mother, with indescribable tenderness, for her heart bled for the misery which every word revealed, "my dear, *did you love him?*"

Lottie was so startled that she looked up into Mrs. Andrews' pitying eyes, and the dimness she saw in them made hot tears spring to her own. She was silent, but her thoughts were busy. Memory carried her back, over the past few weeks. Did she love him—this man she had sworn to love, honour, and obey? She must have had some hideous dream, some nightmare. Was it really herself who had written a note that morning bidding him good-bye, saying he might send for his sister as soon as he liked, for she had gone

"'We are so very grateful for all your kindly counsel.'" *p.* 110.

never to return, and leaving it on his study-table, where he would be sure to see it when he came in tired with his day's work ?

"*Did you love him ?*" repeated her step-mother wistfully, yearningly.

Lottie burst into tears, and cried as if her heart would break.

Mrs. Andrews quietly left the room.

* * * * *

Leonard Fairfax sat in an armchair by his study writing-table, with an almost colourless face. Before him lay Lottie's letter wide open, with its hateful contents exposed to view.

Had it come to this ? Had he lost the beautiful young wife he loved so tenderly ? He forgot her faults, forgot her reckless extravagance, and the ill temper she showed whenever he tried to control her—forgot everything except that he loved her, and that she was gone.

It was cold and cheerless there in his study, where the fire was not lighted. The evenings were still chilly, and now it was the hour of twilight. Tired and hungry though he was, he had forgotten all about his dinner, which had twice been announced.

He had lost Lottie, his beautiful young wife—and—and he loved her.

It was years since he, the strong, reserved man, had wept, but now the hot tears came into his eyes. He dashed them away, and looked round to see if anyone were near to observe his weakness. No, he was alone. What was that upon the hearthrug ? He stooped and picked it up. It was Lottie's purse, her empty purse, thrown there contemptuously as she left the room.

It cut him to the heart. He groaned as he held the little purse tenderly in his hand. Had he been hard on her ? She was so ignorant of the value of money. She had never been taught to be business-like. He ought to have been more patient, much more patient. He loved her. Ah, sometimes latterly, when she provoked him and he thought he had just cause to be angry, he had forgotten how much, how *very much* he loved her.

But he remembered now—now, when she was gone.

"Leonard, dearest Leonard," cried Lottie's voice just then, as she ran into the study and impulsively threw her arms around his neck and pressed soft kisses on his brow, "can you forgive me ? I am sorry, indeed I am. I have behaved very badly—but—but I love you."

"My darling!" Leonard took her in his arms, and what he said was for her ears alone.

* * * * *

Mrs. Andrews did not see Lottie again until the following day, which was Sunday, when they met at the lych-gate, on their way to church. She then perceived at a glance that all was well, and understood the deep meaning with which, as he greeted her, Leonard said—

"We are so very grateful to you, mother, for all your kindly counsel."

And then Lottie, too, who knew perfectly well that she had only uttered the four words contained in her one question, persisted in saying, "Yes, mother dear, we have taken *all* your advice, and I cannot tell you how much we love you for it. And, mother, don't you think it is a good plan ?" she went on eagerly. "Amy Fairfax is coming to stay with us, at *my* request, and she is going to help me to understand the art and science of keeping house without exceeding our income. I'm sure I can do it when once I have learnt how. Leonard says I can."

"Of course she can," said Leonard quickly, looking at her with great pride. "She is so clever, you know, and so very teachable."

"She is indeed," said the gentle step-mother, smiling, and thinking how few had been the words from which Lottie had learnt so deep a lesson.

MOTHERS IN COUNCIL.

CONDUCTED BY MRS. E. M. WATERWORTH, AUTHOR OF "MOTHERS AT HOME," ETC.

July 1st, 1896.

MY DEAR FRIENDS,—The question of corporal punishment seems never to be settled. From time to time I get letters on the subject, and now I am gently reminded by a "WORN-OUT MOTHER" that not many months ago some one wrote in this magazine recommending judicious corporal punishment for a child of very tender—shall I say *months ?*

My dear "WORN-OUT MOTHER," I am of the same opinion still, and should be if all the mothers in England disagreed with me. Perhaps you think I am rather like the angry juryman, who, having a different opinion of the case from all the others, stamped his foot and said he never saw eleven such pig-headed men in his life ! Parents and guardians should begin the children's training as soon as they are born, and then we should hear less about the need for flogging. If your little boy of seven hits his sister because she breaks his toys, you will scold him ; if he another day disobeys you, you whip him, or as he would say, you *hit* him. Now, how can you expect your child to believe in your justice ? Try some other way, dear mother, and don't lower yourself and your children by whipping. Now and then, perhaps in a lifetime, corporal punishment may be absolutely necessary, but then it should be administered after much thought and prayer, in which the child should share.

* * * *

Yes, "ABIGAIL," I know it is a popular fancy that hard boiled eggs are indigestible, but it is not exactly true. This is, I believe, the real fact : if an egg is boiled merely five or six minutes, it is indigestible, but if you boil it at least *fifteen* it is as digestible as in any other form.

* * * *

"MABEL" wants to know how she can make the children's beds so that they don't get all tumbled and uncomfortable, especially as one of her youngsters is very restless in his sleep. The best way is to be careful to tuck the underneath blanket and sheet well in at the *top ;* it won't matter if they do not quite cover the farther end of the mattress. Then tuck the top clothes

well in at the *bottom;* taking care also that each covering should be tucked in at the sides separately. This simple plan is invaluable in sickness and with restless children, and if I had my own way, I would have a printed card hung in every bedroom, "How to make the bed."

* * * *

So your lamps "smell horribly," do they, "MARGARET"? Let me give you a wrinkle. Get some new wicks, soak them well in strong vinegar, and let them dry thoroughly before you use them. Be careful that there is not the least drop of oil on the outside of the lamp. It is always well to have a rag at hand after carrying a lamp, to wipe it thoroughly. Turn it up only a little way when you first light it, then raise it in about five minutes. Do not cut the wick at all, unless it is uneven; rub off the charred part every day with a rag, or with some soft paper, and I do not think you will have cause to complain again. I have been told that wax tapers or matches should not be used for lighting lamps.

* * * *

If your shoes get out of shape, "JANE," you should either buy or have made for you *straight* shoes. You can then move them from one foot to the other, and wear the heels evenly, and also prevent the sole spreading one way. I speak feelingly, as I have to do this myself. It is always well, when your shoes or boots are damp, to bend the soles back when you take them off.

* * * *

OUR PUZZLE PARAGRAPH.

"JENNY" wants to know how much money she ought to spend in furnishing a seven-roomed house, and how she should arrange it for husband and wife, one child, and one servant. Answers to this puzzle should be addressed to me at 9, Paternoster Row, London, E.C., marked Puzzle Paragraph, not later than the 15th inst. A prize, consisting of a book valued at 2s. 6d., will be given to the writer of the best solution, which will be printed in these columns.

* * * *

I should like to be able to give four prizes at least for the answers to the April puzzle. All the letters were wonderfully good and interesting, and as the so-called "Mrs. Roberts" happens to be my unworthy self, I have chosen the one which I feel to be the most helpful. Yet, for all that, Mrs. Wood and Mrs. Allen can be assured that if I had more prizes to give they would each have had one. Better luck next time. The fourth prize, if there were one, would have gone to F. A. F. G., whose pretty contribution I would print if I had room for it. I have awarded the prize to Mrs. Burbidge and hope she likes her book. I can also praise most heartily the answers from Mrs. Marks, Mrs. Nash, Mrs. Ticehurst. Mrs. Thorowgood, Mrs. Crawley, and Mrs. Muggins, Misses Laight, Cumming, Florence Davis, "Iris," M. R. M., and P. E. G. S.

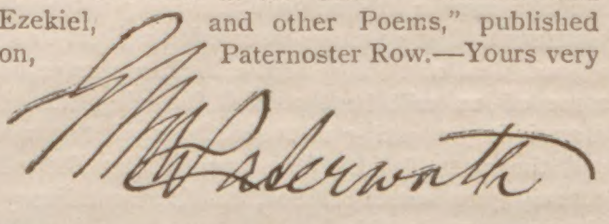
* * * *

The prize answer reads as follows:—

"With respect to the little bookworm of eight summers, I would say by *no* means treat her love of books *as a fault*, nor forbid her to read, but exercise judicious choice in books for her, remembering that this is all-important. Help and encourage the little child to make use of any book-knowledge she has acquired; avoid leaving her too much alone; provide her with a cheerful companion of about her own age (if she has no sisters), but not a bookworm; suggest varied occupations; enlarge the child's knowledge by 'natural observations;' try to instil a liking for needlework, not necessarily all *plain*, but pretty (include doll-dressing, which little girls generally like so much); also a liking for music suitable to her age, or other subjects. Teach her the alphabet, as it were, of domestic housework, encouraging any childish efforts on her part. It would be a wise plan to arrange definitely the length of time for each or either occupation daily, provision having been made for regular 'school-hours,' also for necessary 'recreation' time. This course will enlarge the child's ideas and assist in developing her character. She will become interested not only in books, but in the many useful subjects which her wise mother has taught. As she grows older she will in all probability show an inclination for some particular branch of industry."

* * * *

The lines you quote, "J. C.," come from an exquisite poem called "The Man at the Gate." You will find it in "Ezekiel, and other Poems," published by Nelson, Paternoster Row.—Yours very truly,



THE KINDLY HEART.

OH! why are we always so ready
To hear what another may say—
To canvass the faults of a neighbour,
Forgetting our own by the way?
We know not the heart that we censure;
Be gentle, forgiving, and kind;
One drop from the fountain of pity
A wound that is bleeding may bind.

A word, like an angel of mercy,
The sunshine of gladness may bear;
May cheer a lone spirit forsaken,
Or add to the weight of its care.

A word! do we think of its import,
Though uttered, perhaps, with a smile?
A heart may be writhing beneath it,
Or breaking with anguish the while.

A word that in coldness is spoken
May sever the friendship of years;
The flowers of feeling may wither,
And leave them in sorrow and tears.
Then why should we always be ready
To hear what another may say—
To canvass the faults of a sister,
Forgetting our own by the way?

HINTS ON HOME DRESSMAKING.

BY A PRACTICAL DRESSMAKER.

THE smart and convenient fashion of having a skirt and jacket which can be worn with a blouse bodice, waistcoat-front, or shirt will be popular this season both for elder girls and ladies. There is in this style, however, some change, which will be a decided improvement. For instance, the jacket is shorter and less masculine in character, there being both velvet and lace used to trim the lapels. The conventional coat sleeve of last year, too, has given place to a sleeve having a Tudor wrist with a tight-fitting portion below the elbow and a full puff falling over.

Fig. 23.

In the warmer weather, blouses will be worn without the coat. The plain shirt seems to be giving way to one profusely trimmed and made of figured cambric or zephyr. Lines of butter-coloured Valenciennes alternated with narrow tucks take the place of the hard, plain front worn through the last two summer seasons, and in some instances little frills of the same lace trim the whole length of the sleeve, from the shoulder to the cuff. Collars are mostly straight and stand up, and the cuff is moderately deep. Blouses made in muslin and silk are seen in great variety, and, contrary to last year, are worn with a short basque with a good deal of fulness at the back, a change for which some of us will be thankful, knowing the difficulty there is in preventing an unsightly gap between the skirt and the waist-band. The loose bishop sleeve has not entirely gone out of fashion, but the most dressy-looking blouses are made with a semi-fitting sleeve, with the Tudor wrist coming well over the hand and ending in a lace ruffle.

Fig. 23. This illustration shows a lady's dress made with jacket fronts after the order of an Eton coat. The material used is mulberry coloured cloth of a fine, light make. The bodice is finished with a short full basque such as will be worn during this season, and the jacket front opens over a waistcoat of fawn cloth or silk. Straps and covered buttons of the same finish the jacket fronts and also the sleeve. A deep, square-cornered collar is used in place of revers. Skirt and sleeves are moderately full, and the neck has a collarette of lace and ribbon.

Fig. 24. We show here a blouse bodice with open fronts and large pointed revers. It will make a dressy bodice for afternoon wear over a black crêpon skirt. The jacket fronts should be lined with silk, and the full plastron, which is bag-shaped, can be of silk, lace, or muslin, with a neck-band to correspond. Lace frills, such as finish these sleeves, will be much worn, and are arranged so as to fall over the hand.

Fig. 26.

Fig. 25. This design will do admirably for a lady's bodice made in tweed or serge, the pattern being such as is used for the tailor-made costume. It fastens invisibly down the side with patent hooks, and is trimmed with bars of braid and buttons set on in threes between the plain front and the collar piece. This reaches from the waist, and is shaped like a rever. It must be lined with stiff muslin, or, better still, tailor's canvas, and also with silk or sateen. The collar is a novel turned-down shape fitted on to a high stand-up collar, and this must also have a stiff interlining. Sleeve with a moderate fulness at the top and tight below the elbow.

Fig. 26. This is a useful pattern for a girl's dress, and will do for woollen or cotton material. If used for cotton, the skirt need not be lined, but can be finished with a wide hem at the bottom. The body is made over a fitting lining, and is arranged in gathers at the neck and shoulders. At the waist the fulness is gathered into a band. The neck is finished with a turned-down collar, and the sleeve with a cuff. Braid trimming will answer for a woollen dress, and embroidery or lace insertion for a cotton one.

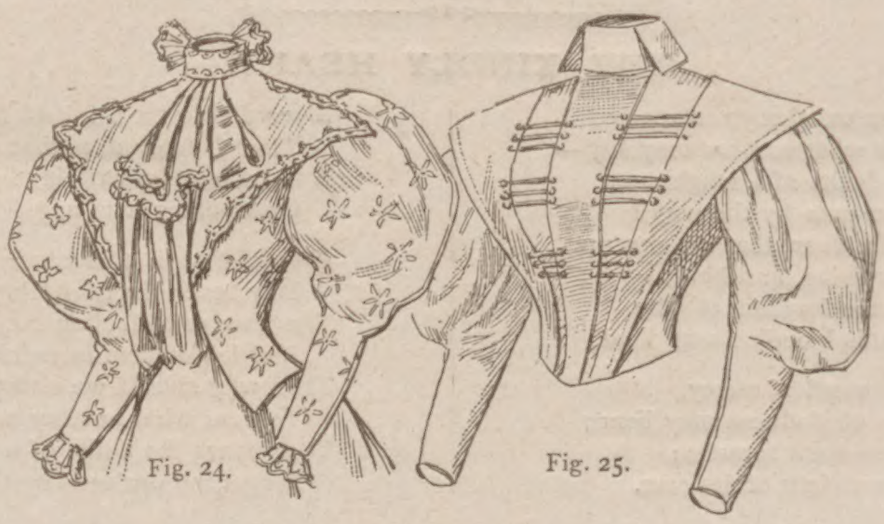


Fig. 24. Fig. 25.

Flat patterns can be supplied. Figs. 23, 24, 25, and 26, 6½d. each, post free. Address "M.C. Pattern," 9, Paternoster Row, London, E.C.